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*"Industrial Horizon's"  
Tourist Industry Issue*

[Jun 1977]

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*(Each year an estimated \$15-20 billion is spent by tourists, including business travelers, in the United States. How can Montana get a bigger part—than its present \$90 million—of this market? State Advertising Director Gordon Platts discusses this question in a special article for "Industrial Horizons.")*

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# Increasing Our Tourist Income

By GORDON PLATTS  
State Advertising Director

One of the greatest competitive battles taking shape in the early 60's is the drive to improve economic conditions of communities, states and nations. This hot war is generally fought with a two pronged offensive—one to bring in industry, the other to bring in tourists.

The fight for tourists (like the fight for industry) is an openly competitive battle. Close examination of the tremendous amount of travel advertising carried by leading travel magazines will give the unfamiliar observer an idea of the size of just one phase of this operation.

In Montana, tourist promotion is the responsibility of many private organizations as well as the Advertising Department of the Montana Highway Commission.

## Surveys Provide Insight

In 1958 and 1959, surveys were carried out which have provided an insight into not only what the tourist spends, but also the influences upon the visitor who travels into this state. These surveys dramatically demonstrate the importance of selling Montana and its communities not only before but during the trip. Pre-selling and post-selling are both necessary and effective in the battle for the tourist business. (See page 4 for a discussion of the 1958 survey—Ed.)

Advertising, publicity, and promotion are the tools that increase the number of visitors to Montana. But these activities do more than this. Pre-selling keeps visitors in the state longer, which is just as important economically to Montana as bringing in greater numbers of tourists.

The 1959 tourist survey conducted by the Advertising Department showed the importance of this "pre-selling" of Montana as a destination state rather than an area visitors pass through going somewhere else. Of those who gave a definite indication of their final destination, the 33 per cent listing Montana as their main objective stayed 5.6 days. The remaining 67 per cent had a destination other than the Treasure State and stayed only 2.4 days. In 1958, 35 per cent of the tourists reported they had seen Advertising Department promotional effects before coming into the state. These figures are important. Increasing the state's popularity as a destination by another one-third would have increased the dollar input into Montana by about \$20 million.

## The Pre-Sold Visitor

The pre-sold Montana visitor stays longer and contributes more to our economy. But all tourists can be slowed down and encouraged to spend more time in the state.

Many organizations and businesses who come in contact with the tourist are doing an effective selling job at the local level. As a result of a program initiated in 1958

by the Advertising Department, after the close of the highway tourist courtesy stations, nearly 1,000 firms, organizations or individuals began actively distributing department literature—selling the tourist on staying longer.

Many believe the average vacationer cannot be deterred once his trip is started. The 1958 survey showed that these people are more of an open market than expected. Nearly 62 per cent did not plan their steps in advance. The implication of these findings is apparent.

## "An Attractive Face"

If individuals and communities wish to get business from this large percentage of Montana's tourists, they must work to present an attractive face to the passing motorist, give the motorist some attractions that will hold him and vigorously sell these attractions to all tourists going by.

Tourists, for the most part, are an open market and they can be sold on staying longer.

The way of life of the average U.S. citizen is changing at a rapid pace. The diminishing work-week, improved highways, longer annual vacations and better transportation will have a profound effect on Montana's tourist industry in the near future. Competition for this leisure time and the leisure dollar is increasing also, and Montana must become a major power in the battle to get its fair share of the tourist dollar.

*The wave of 2½ million visitors which sweeps across Montana each year leaves some \$90 million in its wake. This is an important addition to Montana's economy—but an addition which can and should be larger. State Advertising Director Gordon Platts outlines some of the ways to increase our tourist income in an article on page one of "Industrial Horizons"—here is the story of another area which should be developed, that of the sale of gifts and souvenirs. The people involved are:*

## Montana's Artists And Craftsmen



We like to remember our vacations—we take along cameras to record a beautiful scene, we stop along the road to pick up an unusual rock, we visit shop after shop to purchase souvenirs and gifts.

For the Montana visitor, these souvenirs range from the T-shirt with a picture of Yellowstone's famed bears to fine agate jewelry made in the Flathead area. Tourists can buy custom gun stocks in Cooke City and pottery from the Archie Bray foundation in Helena. Even the sportsman can have his "souvenir" of Montana finished here—by taxidermists like Karl A. Friederich of Columbia Falls.

But in Montana, the knick-knack bought for a quarter and the quality art and craft goods which sell for many times that generally have this in common—too few are made locally. Unlike the wood carving of an Indian mother at the left, both made and sold by Morris Blake at his Hungry Horse Corral in Hungry Horse, many souvenirs of our state have about as much Montana flavor as a picture of Yosemite brought home from Yellowstone Park.

And yet it would seem the New York visitor to Montana would rather buy a Montana-made product, to remember his vacation, than one manufactured in New York City and shipped here. In an article in the April issue of "Redbook" ("Souvenir Hunter's Guide to the U.S.A."), Peter Celliers says, "we feel sorry for people. . . . who come home with a . . . 'birchbark' canoe made of cardboard that came by way of Wisconsin from a factory in Japan."

Celliers suggests in his article places in the United States, from coast to coast, where native-made souvenirs can be bought. From Montana, he includes the agate jewelry of James Kehoe in the Flathead area, and adds:

"In Montana, look for beaded moccasins and belts among other Blackfoot and Flathead Indian crafts at the Cooperative

Shop in the Museum of the Plains Indians at Browning and at Tipi Smoke Curios, Billings. Kootenai Buckskin, at Bigfork, are specialists in buckskin jackets and shirts. Polished or cut agates and jade are available at the Agate Shop at colorful Holt Bridge and at the Montana Gem Shop at Miles City. Forest products are the basis of unusual souvenirs at the Montana House near Bigfork—staghorn jewelry, decorated matchboxes and note cards and cottonwood log centerpieces."

Celliers mentions only a few of Montana's many gifted people, however—a "Souvenir Hunter's Guide to Montana" could be a many-paged affair. In the Livingston area alone, the Chamber of Commerce reports that such different items as fishing flies, copper and agate jewelry, elk call whistles and ceramics are made by local residents for sale to tourists as well as residents.

How best can we promote this work, both of our artists and craftsmen? Blake told the Planning Board, "I would like to encourage small shops such as mine, although I believe they should group or concentrate in a small area such as we are trying to do here in Hungry Horse—where we have a buckskin shop, leather shop and several artists who are doing very well."

### September Meeting

In September the State Planning Board hopes to meet with the directors of the Montana Institute of the Arts—an organization of approximately 800 individuals from 100 different cities in the state. Established in 1948 to assess the cultural resources of Montana and to devise ways and means for promoting a more active use of these resources, the MIA, according to its immediate past president, Larry Gill of Great Falls, has had a limited program for merchandising Montana-made art goods.

Gill told the Planning Board, "We have been interested in developing a market-



*Among Montana's fine craftsmen are several makers of custom guns. These men include Wayne Schwartz (pictured above) of Cooke City, who is mainly a stock maker; Monty Kennedy of Kalispell, an experienced gunsmith and stock maker; J. R. Buhmiller of Kalispell, whose specialty is gun barrels, and Bill Hobaugh of Philipsburg, who furnishes barrels to Schwartz*

ing program, but we haven't known quite how to go about it." The purpose for the Planning Board-MIA meeting will be to discuss merchandising methods which will help put more Montana-made products for tourists on the shelves of our Montana stores. This is the goal of several regional art and craft leagues across the country.

In New Hampshire, some 3,000 craftsmen use the facilities of the League of New Hampshire Arts and Crafts. Miss Elizabeth A. Steele of the League reported to the Planning Board that the League has set up 11 shops throughout New Hampshire, also sponsors a week-long Annual Craftsmen's Fair in August.

To help with out-of-state marketing, the New Hampshire League also keeps in close touch with America House and the American Craftsmen's Council. America House is a national marketing organization set up "to provide wider distribution for those craftsmen who are interested in it." This group has headquarters at Sun Valley, Idaho.

#### **Southern Highland Guild**

Through the Southern Highland Handicraft Guild, Inc., some 1,000 craftsmen in the mountain areas of Maryland, the Virginias, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Alabama market their craft goods. The Guild also maintains its own shop, sponsors an annual fair.

Perhaps the closest thing in Montana to these Eastern shops is Montana House, a regional craft center at West Glacier. Founded by Hans Jungster and his wife first at Bigfork, then expanded to a shop in Apgar Village, Montana House is not only a sales outlet for the arts and crafts work done by the Jungsters and other Montana artists and craftsmen, but also

serves as a studio for resident artist-designers. (First of these artist-designers was Mrs. L. O. Brockman of Havre, an experimental and creative weaver since 1944, and the wife of the president of Northern Montana College.)

Products from the Montana House include hand weaving, wheel thrown pottery, hand dipped candles, country sportswear, jewelry of enameled copper, deer and elk horn, silver, agate, and jade. The chalet-type store designed by Architect Percy Lenon of Kalispell also includes a fine-arts gallery.

#### **Mass Produced Souvenirs**

Visitors to our state, however, are interested not only in our art and craft goods. The market for smaller mass-produced souvenir items also is important economically to Montana, and one perhaps even less developed. The history of the Laurretta Studio is typical of what can be done to develop the manufacturing and marketing of these smaller items in Montana.

Laurretta Studio, a portrait photography studio in Butte, is run by Mr. and Mrs. A. Walkup. About five years ago this couple launched a scenic color postcard business. Mrs. Walkup reports they now have published approximately 75 postcards—some of which have been done in runs of 6,000 and quite a few in quantities as large as 12,000.

"It is an expensive gamble," Mrs. Walkup told the Planning Board, "as we sell to dealers wholesale, who in turn must depend on the public for their return. It has been most frustrating to us to present beautiful Montana views to potential buyers done by Montana people, and find that they prefer, in many instances, to buy from someone in Arizona, Denver,

Salt Lake or Washington—often other than Montana views."

The couple, however, has tried to impress dealers with the value that Montana scenes would have in bringing people to our state. After five years, the Walkups have broken into the West Yellowstone and Glacier markets with their earthquake pictures. One is a 5½x7 card which shows a scene of Madison Canyon before and after last August's earthquake—a postcard only someone "on the spot" could have done.

#### **Will Furnish Many Jobs**

Though the Walkups employ no help at the present time, they believe their business could grow into something larger.

"We feel that each one of these lovely little ambassadors, picturing some charm of our State, will bring many to the locality," Mrs. Walkup said. "This in turn will furnish many jobs for many people in many lines."

Mrs. Walkup was talking about the postcard business, but what she says is equally true of other items which Montanans could produce for our tourist trade. There are many Montana-made products—arts, crafts, and souvenirs—which could be ambassadors, not only advertising the Land of the Shining Mountains to potential tourists, but furnishing new jobs for our Montana residents.

And Dr. L. O. Brockman, president, Northern Montana College, has pointed out a third important reason for the development of Montana's arts and crafts.

Said Dr. Brockmann, "The industrialization of Montana needs to go hand in hand with our cultural development. The cultural development of our state will encourage new industry to follow."

## What Does He Look Like?

Man is an impossible animal to categorize—and if, in our ranks, there is one who can be called "average" we'd like to see him!

The strangers in Montana every summer, the tourists who pass through our state, are no different—each one has his own needs, his own interests, his own reasons for coming to Montana. But to try to find out a little more about these "strangers," a picture of a statistical man can be drawn—a description which comes from an analysis of a sampling of Montana tourists made two summers ago for the State Highway Commission.

John S. Wright, professor in the school of Business Administration at Montana State University, compiled a profile of the Montana visitor from this study for the June, 1960 issue of the "Montana Business Review."

Said Wright, "It is our hope that a careful examination of the facts... will give Montanans a better understanding of the tourist and thus enable them more satisfactorily to serve his needs. Only in this way can the tourist industry in our state be expected to prosper."

We agree with Mr. Wright—and for that reason, present in "Industrial Horizons" part of his "Profile of a Montana Visitor." Note that:

—The average tourist party numbers slightly over three persons.

—The party will frequently contain no children under 18 years of age.

—Adult members of tourist parties tend to span the entire range of ages in a fairly equal pattern.

—The head of the tourist party usually works in a professional or technical occupation, or as a manager, proprietor, or official.

—He takes annual vacations, probably somewhere in the West.

—The principal destination for his vacation trip is Montana, the Rocky Mountain States, the West Coast, or Canada.

—His decision to visit Montana was made jointly with his wife during the three months prior to their arrival in the state.

—He has probably been in Montana before (more than one-half of our visitors have been) and often has friends or relatives who have visited Montana.

—His trip will take about three weeks, for which he has budgeted \$411.

—As a rule, he does not make advance reservations for overnight accommodations.

—He will stay in Montana about four nights, and will travel 250 miles per day while he is here.

—Sight-seeing will be his principal activity in Montana. Visiting historic spots, observing nature, and attending rodeos and horse shows are common ways of sight-seeing.

—His party will spend \$22 per day, broken down as follows:

Lodging	\$5.95
Meals, on premises	4.82
Groceries	1.60
Gasoline and automotive costs	7.26
Other expenses	2.46

—He probably plans to return to Montana at some future date.

## this month at the Mitchell Building . . .

... Everett V. Darlinton was named Assistant Director of the State Planning Board at the Board's June meeting. Darlinton has been with the Planning Board since July, 1958, as Industrial Engineer. He attended Bozeman schools, and graduated from Montana State College with a degree in industrial engineering in 1941. Darlinton was employed by General Electric Company in Schenectady, New York, from 1943 to 1952, and from 1952 until he joined the staff of the Planning Board, was engaged in business in Bozeman.

## in the news . . .

Construction of a Conventional Built Homes Co. plant is scheduled to begin at once in Lewistown after a successful drive to organize the Central Montana Industrial Development Corporation. The plant, which will serve a 9 state area, will have a capacity of 1,800 to 2,000 homes a year. Approximately 80 people will be employed. Lee S. Belding, manager of the Central Montana Chamber of Commerce, reports, "We are confident this will be the beginning of a new era for Lewistown and Central Montana."

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A research program in lodgepole pine will begin early in August at Montana State College, Bozeman. Studies will be made to solve utilization and economics problems connected with the management and use of lodgepole pine. David Tackle of the U. S. Forest Service will be in charge of the research center, and the college will furnish office space and other facilities.

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Perry F. Roys has been promoted to director of area development in six states for Northern Natural Gas Co. Before going to Northern a year ago, Roys was director of the Montana State Planning Board.

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The president of Montana Power Co., J. E. Corette, says that there is every reason to anticipate that Montana's economic growth in the 1960s will be as great or greater than in the 1950s. Corette based his confidence in the state's future on a continued increase in population, industrial development, and greater stability in Montana's mining and smelting industry.

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Wenzel and Co. of Great Falls was awarded the architect-engineer contract for the first operational Air Force Minuteman base near Malmstrom Air Force Base, the Air Force announced.

## Industrial Horizons

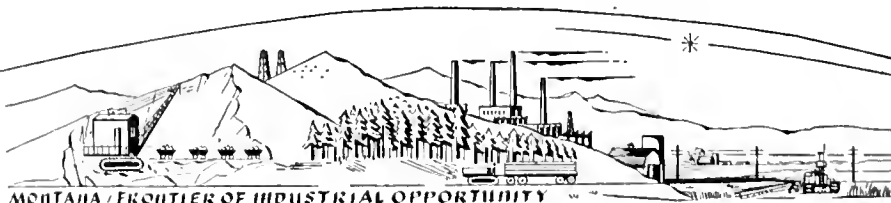
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